

Attendance Matters

Attendance for Students:

- ✓ Students must be present in order for the best possible learning to take place.
- ✓ Students who are absent or tardy lose valuable instruction.
- ✓ The State Compulsory Attendance Law requires parents to ensure their children attend school daily.
- ✓ The importance of being in attendance and being on time is an important lesson for students to learn at an early age. Students are forming habits that will carry over to their careers and personal lives.
- ✓ Students cannot accumulate more than **10 unlawful absences**.
- ✓ If absent, a student must present a written excuse signed by a parent, guardian, medical or dental practitioner or an appropriate person within three (3) days after returning to school.
- ✓ If a student fails to provide a proper excuse, the absence may be recorded as unlawful.

Lawful Absences:

- ✓ Ill students whose attendance is in endangers their health
- ✓ Students who are chronically ill.
- ✓ Students who keep medical or dental appointments.
- ✓ Students who have an immediate family member who is seriously ill.
- ✓ Students attending a funeral of an immediate family member.
- ✓ Students participating in a recognized religious holiday of their faith.
- ✓ Students who have prior permission to participate in school-sponsored or school-approved activities.
- ✓ Students who have unusual or mitigating circumstances.

Unlawful Absences:

- ✓ Students are willfully absent from school without the knowledge of their parent/legal guardian.
- ✓ Students are absent without acceptable cause with the knowledge of the parent/legal guardian.

Attendance for Course Credit: Grades 9-12

- ✓ High school credit may be denied if the student has more than five (5) unlawful absences in a half-unit course or more than ten (10) unlawful absences in a whole-unit course, regardless of academic performance in the class.
- ✓ Students who lose credit due to attendance will receive a FA with a score of 51 as the final grade of the course. This is mandated by the state uniform grading scale, and it affects the students grade point average. (GPA).
- ✓ It is important that the student provides excuses for every absence.

Truancy:

- ✓ After three consecutive or a total of five unlawful absences, a student is considered truant. Parents will be notified of the absences and will set up a conference to discuss the reasons for which the student has been absent.
- ✓ After two or more additional unlawful absences, a student is considered habitually truant. A meeting will be set with the parent and student to develop an Attendance Intervention Plan. We will discuss about lawful and unlawful absences and communicate the consequences of continued unlawful absences.
- ✓ After two or more unlawful absences, parents will be notified and an attendance hearing at the district office with the district attendance officer.
- ✓ Additional unlawful absences may result in a petition by the district to family court for a School Attendance Order. If accepted, a hearing will be held in family court in front of a judge.
- ✓ If two or more additional absences occur after family court has placed the student on a School Attendance Order, the district may file a petition for "Contempt of Court" with family court.

Early Dismissals:

- ✓ Students are encouraged to remain in school for the full day.
- ✓ If for some reason a student is dismissed early, that early dismissal will count against the student's attendance for that particular class or classes for the remainder of the day.
- ✓ Students may not be signed out early within 30 minutes of dismissal time. After the deadline, parents will have to wait until the regular dismissal time.
- ✓ Repeated dismissals from school can negatively affect a student's academic performance. The administration may develop an attendance plan for students with frequent early dismissals from school.

What you can do:

- ✓ Make school attendance a priority.
 - Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day.
 - Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
 - If your child needs to stay home, make sure they communicate to their teachers about missing assignments.
- ✓ Help your teen stay engaged.
 - Monitor your child's academic progress.
 - Encourage your child to join meaningful after-school activities, such as sports and clubs.
- ✓ Communicate with the school.
 - Know the school's attendance policy
 - Check on your child's attendance to be sure absences are not adding up.
 - Seek help from school staff, other parents, or community agencies.

